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EXAMINER

BAUSCH, SARAE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1634

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/817,102	Applicant(s) CAUFIELD ET AL.	
	Examiner SARAE BAUSCH	Art Unit 1634	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 19 March 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-9,11-15,20,22-24,26-29 and 32-46 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 28 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,5-9,11-15,22-24,26-29 and 32-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 20, 44-46 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. Currently, claims 1, 3-9, 11-15, 20, 22-24, 26-29, and 32-46 are pending in the instant application. Claims 2, 10, 16-19, 21, 25, and 30-31 have been canceled, and claim 28 is withdrawn. This action is written in response to applicant's correspondence submitted 02/02/2008. All the amendments and arguments have been thoroughly reviewed but were found insufficient to place the instantly examined claims in condition for allowance. Any rejections not reiterated in this action have been withdrawn as necessitated by applicant's amendments to the claims. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action. **This action is Final.**

Withdrawn Rejections

2. The rejection of claims 1-3, 5-9, 11-15, 22-24 under 35 USC 102(a) made in section 7 of the office action mailed 03/19/2008 are withdrawn in view of the amendment to claim 1 to include a collection point from which materials are collected from a city street.

New Grounds of Rejection

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5. Claims 1, 3, 5-9, 11-15, 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hoffmaster et al. (Emerging Inf. Diseases, 2002, Vol 8, No. 10, supplement, p. 1-12) in view of German (Water Science and Technology, 2002, vol. 46, pp. 191-198). This rejection is newly presented necessitated by the amendment to the claims.

Hoffmaster et al. teach evaluation and validation of RT-PCR for identification of *Bacillus anthracis* in environmental samples (See page 1, 2nd paragraph). Hoffmaster et al. teach elution of swab specimens and environmental samples in a aqueous solution (collection integrity is preserved) (see page 2, last paragraph cont'd to page 3). Hoffmaster et al. teach a wide variety of samples were tested including dust and vacuum cleaner debris (samples derived from street debris material, sample derived from a street sweeper machine, sample collected in predetermined traceable route) (sample from within a collection bin) (see Real-time PCR in environmental samples, page 5). Hoffmaster et al. each testing environmental samples by PCR by elution of swab specimens and environmental samples in an aqueous solution (see page 2, last paragraph con't to page 3). Hoffmaster et al. teach testing the environmental specimens by real time PCR for the detection of *B. anthracis* (biological agent) (see real time PCR of

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environmental specimens, page 5). Hoffmaster et al. teach reporting the results of the PCR analysis of the samples (see page 5 and page 7). Hoffmaster et al. teach testing the environmental sample by PCR and culture to determine the presence of *B. anthracis*. Hoffmaster teaches that 35 samples were positive by both methods and only 7 were positive by culture only, 4 positive by PCR only (see Real-time PCR in environmental samples, page 5 and page 7, last two paragraphs). Therefore, Hoffmaster, teaches assaying for the presence of a biological agent by comparing the level to a normal level in one or more routes (claim 12-14) (positive result in either PCR or culture). Hoffmaster teaches assaying for an increase or decrease relative to an earlier assay (claim 15-16) (PCR versus culture assay).

Hoffmaster does not teach materials are collected from a city street.

However, German teaches that there is a need to investigate the composition of street sweeping waste (see pg. 191). German teaches analysis of the composition of street sediment and street sweeping waste from a predefined collection route (see pg. 192 and figure 1).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the method of evaluating the identification of *Bacillus anthracis* in environmental samples that included dust and vacuum cleaner debris as taught by Hoffmaster to include environmental samples from street sweeper debris collected from a street, as taught by German, to allow for analysis of the street sweeper waste obtain from a street. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to include street sweeper debris collected from the street as German teaches there is a need to investigate the composition of street sweeping waste from a city street and Hoffmaster teaches analysis of environmental samples to detect biological agents. The ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that an

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environmental sample that was obtained from a street collection site could be used in the method of Hoffmaster because Hoffmaster teaches analysis of different environmental samples, including dust and vacuum cleaner debris and German teaches a need to investigate the composition of street sweeping waste.

Maintained Rejections

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

7. Claims 26-27 and 37-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Hoffmaster et al. (Emerging Inf. Diseases, 2002, Vol 8, No. 10, supplement, p. 1-12).

Hoffmaster et al. teach evaluation and validation of RT-PCR for identification of *Bacillus anthracis* in environmental samples (See page 1, 2nd paragraph). Hoffmaster et al. teach elution of swab specimens and environmental samples in a aqueous solution (collection integrity is preserved) (see page 2, last paragraph cont'd to page 3). Hoffmaster et al. teach a wide variety of samples were tested including dust and vacuum cleaner debris (samples derived from street debris material, sample derived from a street sweeper machine, sample collected in predetermined traceable route) (sample from within a collection bin) (see Real-time PCR in environmental samples, page 5).

With regard to claim 26-27, Hoffmaster et al. teach testing environmental samples by PCR by elution of swab specimens and environmental samples in an aqueous solution (see page 2, last paragraph con't to page 3). Hoffmaster et al. teach testing the environmental specimens by real time PCR for the detection of B. anthracis (biological agent) (see real time PCR of environmental specimens, page 5). Hoffmaster et al. teach reporting the results of the PCR analysis of the samples (see page 5 and page 7).

With regard to claim 37-40 and 42, Hoffmaster et al. teach testing the environmental sample by PCR and culture to determine the presence of B. anthracis. Hoffmaster teaches that 35 samples were positive by both methods and only 7 were positive by culture only, 4 positive by PCR only (see Real-time PCR in environmental samples, page 5 and page 7, last two paragraphs). Therefore, Hoffmaster, teaches assaying for the presence of a biological agent by comparing the level to a normal level in one or more routes (claim 12-14) (positive result in either PCR or culture). Hoffmaster teaches assaying for an increase or decrease relative to an earlier assay (claim 15-16) (PCR versus culture assay).

With regard to claim 41, Hoffmaster et al. teach real-time PCR to detect B. anthracis (see page 1, 2nd full paragraph).

Response to Arguments

8. The response traverses the rejection on page 8-9 of the response mailed 09/18/2008. The response asserts that Hoffmaster does not expressly disclose one sample from a collection of street debris or a route undertaken by a street sweeper machine through a city street and comprises at least one collection point from which the materials are collected from a city street.

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This response has been thoroughly reviewed but not found persuasive. Hoffmaster et al. discloses vacuum cleaner debris. The specification defines a street sweeper machine on page 7 lines 5-10 that a street sweeper machine is a machine that cleans and or collects trash from floors or other places where people gather. The specification further teaches that a street sweeper machine embodies a street sweeper and analogous apparatuses such as floor buffers, including smaller or modified versions used within buildings. Based on the definition and examples provided for in the specification a vacuum cleaner and also vacuum cleaner debris (debris from a vacuum cleaner) is encompassed by the term street sweeper machine and debris. A vacuum cleaner cleans floors and is a modified smaller version of a street sweeper that is used within buildings. Therefore, the teachings of Hoffmaster to include vacuum cleaner debris does disclose samples derived from street debris collected continuously along a route undertaken by a street sweeper machine, as defined in the specification. Therefore, Hoffmaster et al. anticipates the claimed invention. It is noted that claims 26-27 and 37-43 do not require that at least one collection point from which the materials are collected from a city street.

For these reasons, and the reasons made of record in the previous office actions, the rejection is maintained.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

11. Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schlimme et al. (App. Environ. Micro. June 1999, pp. 2754-2757).

Schlimme teach a rapid bioassay that uses *tetrahymena pyriformis* to assess overall bacterial toxicity (see pg. 2754, 1st column, 3rd para.). Schlimme et al. teach this test can be used for the detection of bacterial toxicants and for the risk assessment of bacterial strains. Schlimme et al. teach determining the presence of multiple different bacterial strains, including two *Bacillus* strains by adding bacteria to *T. pyriformis* (see pg. 2754, 2nd column). Schlimme et al. teach analysis of *B. cereus*, two different strains and *B. thuringiensis* as well as *E. Coli*. Schlimme et al. teach that *E. coli* strain was concentrated 10 to 100 fold within *T. pyriformis* (see table 2) and teach that *B. cereus* and *B. thuringiensis* were not toxic to *T. pyriformis* (see table 3). Schlimme et al. does not teach the analysis of *B. anthracis*.

Therefore, it would have been *prima facie* obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the method of assessing overall bacterial toxicity of *Bacillus cereus* and *Bacillus thuringus* as taught by Schlimme to include *Bacillus anthracis*, to improve the method by Schlimme et al.. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to

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improve the method of analyzing the toxicity of bacterial to include *Bacillus anthracis* because Schlimme et al. teaches the use of *T. pyriformis* with multiple different bacterial species of *Bacillus*, including *B. cereus* and *B. thuringus* and the skilled artisan would have been motivated to include multiple other bacterial species and strains, including *B. anthracis*. The ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that the use of *B. anthracis* could be used in the method of Schlimme et al. because Schlimme et al. teach that the use of two different bacillus species, *B. cereus* and *B. thuringensis* function in the same manner in the presence of *T. pyriformis* (see table 3). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to substitute one *Bacillus* species for another species in order to achieve the predictable result of detecting *Bacillus* species by *T. pyriformis*, as taught by Schlimme et al.

Response to Arguments

12. The response traverses the rejection on pages 9-11 of the remarks mailed 09/18/2008.

The response asserts that the skilled artisan would have had to recognize that the bioassay of Schlimme would predictably demonstrate that *T. pyriformis* protozoa are susceptible to the toxic agent released by *B. anthracis* and there is no evidence in the prior art that suggests this susceptibility exists. The response further asserts that there is not a reasonable expectation of success of using the Schlimme test to detect *B. anthracis* because the secondary toxin of *B. anthracis* would not necessarily behave the same as the toxin released by *B. cereus* or *B. thuringiensis*. The response further asserts that the skilled artisan would not have predicted the success of the claimed invention because the Schlimme bioassay did not detect either *Bacillus* strain tested and asserts Schlimme teaches away from the invention.

This response has been thoroughly reviewed but not found persuasive.

The skilled artisan would have motivated to test additional strains in the bioassay of Schlimme and would have a reasonable expectation of success that *B. anthracis* could be assayed in the method of Schlimme because Schlimme teaches analysis of many different bacterial strains, including *Bacillus*. The skilled artisan would have been motivated to include additional strains of *Bacillus*, including *B. anthracis* to assess if *B. anthracis* contains a secondary toxic agent and if *B. anthracis* behaves in a similar manner to the other strains of *Bacillus*, as would be expected by the skilled artisan. It is noted that the rejection is not based on *B. anthracis* being a toxic bacteria to *T. pyriformis* but based on the ability to test and assay for *B. anthracis* in the bioassay of Schlimme. The claims merely require determining the presence of *B. anthracis* within a sample comprising introducing *T. pyriformis* to the sample and assaying the sample for

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the presence of *B. anthracis*. Thus, if the skilled artisan were to perform the method of Schlimme to test for the toxicity of *B. anthracis* the skilled artisan would be performing the method of introducing *T. pyriformis* to a sample and assaying the sample for the presence of *B. anthracis*, regardless the outcome. Additionally, with regards to the remarks of teaching away, the skilled artisan would have been motivated to test *B. anthracis* in the bioassay of Schlimme to determine if *B. anthracis*, a known toxic biological agent, would be detected. Additionally, although Schlimme teaches that neither *Bacillus* strain was toxic to *T. pyriformis*, Schlimme teaches that both *Bacillus* strains were detected in the assay, as the bacteria was detected within *T. pyriformis*, thus the presence of *B. cereus* and *B. thuringiensis* was still determined (see table 3), which the claims merely require.

It is noted that if the claims were amended to recite a method for determining the presence of *Bacillus anthracis* within a sample comprising introducing *Tetrahymena pyriformis* to the sample and assaying the *B. anthracis* within the *Tetrahymena pyriformis* sample for the presence of *Bacillus anthracis* the rejection would be overcome as the rejection is based solely on the claims requiring introducing *T. pyriformis* to the and assaying the sample for *B. anthracis*. Thus any result of the bioassay taught by Schlimme when testing *B. anthracis* would read on the instantly pending claims, however if the claims required a limitation that the *T. pyriformis* contained the *B. anthracis* and the *B. anthracis* was assayed within the *T. pyriformis*, this would overcome the art of record. Neither the prior art or Schlimme suggest or teach introducing *T. pyriformis* to a sample containing *B. anthracis*, wherein the *T. pyriformis* will consume and concentrate the *B. anthracis* in the sample and the detection of the *T. pyriformis* will result in the detection of *B. anthracis*.

13. Claim 32-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schimme as applied to claim 29 and further in view of Weinbauer (App. Environ. Micro. Oct 1998, pp. 3776-3783) and Agrawal et al. (Current Science 2002, vol. 83, pp. 697-699)

The method of Schimme is set forth in section 11 above. Schimme does not teach the use of a membrane or temperature effective to kill vegetative bacteria.

Weinbauer et al. filtration of bacterial communities by filtering through a 10 μ m pore size Nitex screening filter followed by a 3 μ m pore size filter and then a .2 μ m pore size filter to obtain the bacteria (See pg. 3777, dilution cultures).

Agrawal et al. teach culturing B. anthracis followed by heating at 60°C (about 70°C) to inactive any vegetative cells (see pg. 697, 2nd column, 1st paragraph).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the method of Schlimme to include a filtration step to obtain bacteria as taught by Weinbauer and to include a heat step of 60°C to inactive any vegetative cells prior to filtration as taught by Agrawal. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to improve the method of Schlimme to include a heat step to inactive vegetative cells prior to filtration as taught by Agrawal and include a bacterial filtration step as taught by Weinbauer because Schlimme et al. teaches the use of bacterial and protozoa communities and the skilled artisan would have been motivated to include filtration step to obtain a concentrated and pure sample as taught by Weinbauer and heat inactivation of vegetative cells as taught by Agrawal. The ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that the use of heating B. anthracis prior to identification and isolation could be used in the method of

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Schlimme et al. because each method analyzing the bacterial content in a sample. Furthermore, the ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that the use of filtration of bacterial communities could be used in the method of Schlimme et al. because Schlimme et al. teach that the use of analyzing bacterial content. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to include a predictable results of bacterial filtration and heat inactivation prior to filtration to obtain the predictable result of a concentrated sample as taught by Weinbauer, Agrawal, and Schlimme.

14. Claim 34 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schimme as applied to claim 29 above, and further in view of Weinbauer (App. Environ. Micro. Oct 1998, pp. 3776-3783).

The method of Schimme is set forth in section 11 above. Schimme does not teach the use of a first membrane having a pore size larger than *B. anthracis* and a second membrane having a pore size smaller than *B. anthracis*.

Weinbauer et al. filtration of bacterial communities by filtering through a 10 μm pore size Nitex screening filter followed by a 3 μm pore size filter and then a .2 μm pore size filter to obtain the bacteria (See pg. 3777, dilution cultures).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the method of assessing overall bacterial toxicity as taught by Schlimme to include a filtration step to obtain bacteria, to improve the method by Schlimme et al.. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to improve the method of analyzing the toxicity of bacterial to include a bacteria filtration step as taught by Weinbauer because Schlimme et al. teaches the use of bacterial and protozoa communities and the skilled

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artisan would have been motivated to include filtration step to obtain a concentrated and pure sample as taught by Weinbauer. The ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that the use of filtration of bacterial communities could be used in the method of Schlimme et al. because Schlimme et al. teach that the use of analyzing bacterial content. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to include a predictably results of bacterial filtration to include a multiple step filtration system to obtain the predictable result of a concentrated sample as taught by Weinbauer.

15. Claim 35-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schimme as and further in view of Weinbauer applied to claim 34 above, and further in view of Agrawal et al. (Current Science 2002, vol. 83, pp. 697-699)

The method of Schimme and further in view of Weinbauer is set forth in section 12 above. Schimme and further in view of Weinbauer does not teach the use of a first membrane and/or second membrane at a temperature effective to kill vegetative bacteria.

Agrawal et al. teach culturing *B. anthracis* followed by heating at 60°C (about 70°C) to inactive any vegetative cells (see pg. 697, 2nd column, 1st paragraph).

Therefore, it would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to improve the method of Schlimme and further in view of Weinbauer, to include a heat step of 60°C to inactive any vegetative cells prior to filtration. The ordinary artisan would have been motivated to improve the method of Schlimme in view of Weinbauer to include a heat step to inactive vegetative cells prior to filtration. The ordinary artisan would have had a reasonable expectation of success that the use of heating *B. anthracis* prior to identification and isolation could be used in the method of Schlimme et al. and further in

view Weinbauer because each method analyzing the bacterial content in a sample It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to include a predictable results of heat inactivation of vegetative cells prior to obtain the predictable result of a concentrated sample.

Response to Arguments

16. The response traverses the rejections above on pages 11- 13 of the remarks mailed 09/18/2008. The response asserts in each traversal with respect to either Weinbauer or Agrarwal, used in combination or alone, that the claims depend from claim 29. Claim 29 is not obvious over Schlimme because the bioassay disclosed in Schlimme would not have been predictive for detecting B. anthracis and teaches away from detecting Bacillus strains, neither Weinbauer or Agarwal do not cure the deficiencies of Schlimme. These responses have been thoroughly reviewed but not found persuasive for the reasons set forth in section 12 above.

Conclusion

17. Claims 4, 20, 44-46 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

18. No claims are allowable.

19. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SARA E BAUSCH whose telephone number is (571)272-2912. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla can be reached on (571) 272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at (866) 217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

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For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.

/Sarae Bausch/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1634